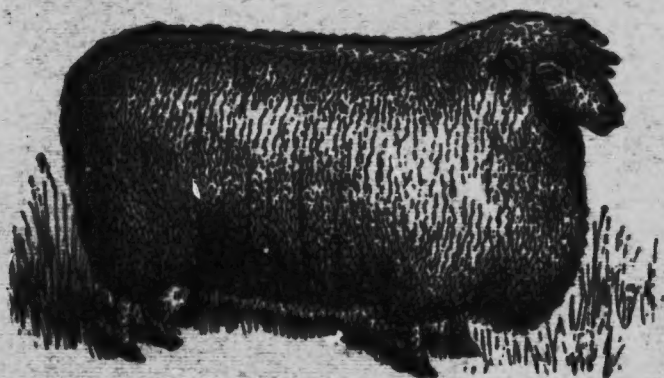




Talk on Sheep

By JOHN CAMPBELL,
WOODVILLE,
ONT.



WITH COMPLIMENTS OF
LONG & BISBY, LIMITED,
WOOL DEALERS,
HAMILTON, CANADA.

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IT is rather a pleasant task to publicly advocate anything which is growing fast in popularity. Several times in past years it has been my lot to stand on this platform, endeavoring to say something in favor of sheep-husbandry, and try to help staying the discarding of sheep, which has been so persistently practised all over our fair Province.

Now that the tide has turned, and that, with a rush probably, speaking in support of "a growing time," as the politicians say, is not a burdensome duty.

In all farm operations, the two usually prominent considerations are, cost and profit. One may farm on a large scale, and spend in operating it, all, or nearly all, the income. Add to that the worth—if we can estimate it—of the worry, caused by scarcity of help, and the sauciness, coupled with poor quality, in some of it, to find the sum total of more than one farm account in Canada this present year.

Then talk as we may, the fact is looming up week by week, and the impression is deepening, that lower values of several farm products are setting in.

Before coming to my subject, directly, let me note another fact—of late years we have been living more expensively than ever. To meet that larger expenditure we found it necessary to increase

our incomes, and we have done so splendidly, but how? Have we not aimed at, and succeeded in marketing our crops in different forms, and at much higher market values; hays and grains, and such raw materials, have been manufactured into cheese and butter; bacon, hogs, fat cattle, and finished lambs, to a limited extent, and other products, bringing us far more money. and building up our partly exhausted fields. All went well while steady markets allowed fair margins, and rising ones yielded profits to please and stimulate us; but when down-grade markets face us month after month, and still expensive labor keeps up the cost of production, the natural and next step is to meet the changed conditions, by changing our methods to some extent.

The sheep-rearing industry meets that demand as no other known live-stock production can.

The labor required in caring for sheep is far less than that necessary in handling other kinds of stock. An illustration from my own experience satisfies me on that point. While caring for a hundred sheep in the winter months alone, the time required is considerably less than two men need in looking after twenty-five cattle and eight horses. In summer the saving of labor is still greater. Fenced fields, with salt and water, in daytime, and a dog-proof enclosure for nights, makes the work next to none. We need but little

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experience to convince us that of all our four-footed domestic animals sheep have a long lead in economy of labor in proportion to the possible profits.

The next reason worthy of our special consideration is, that growing a hundred pounds of lamb costs much less than a similar increase in weight of any other kind of live-stock. Last winter, in advancing this idea at our Agricultural College judging class, and afterwards in the agricultural press, the opinion was given, and figures produced in support, that it cost \$2 74 less in feed alone to produce an increase of 100 lbs. live weight in the fattening of lamb than of the stall-fed bullock; and when to that is coupled the fact of finished lambs selling in late winter or early spring, the past ten years at, at least, one dollar per hundred live weight more than the first-class stall-fed shipping bullock, on the average, we cannot but be surprised at the wholesale discarding of sheep from so many farms in every country.

To date no one has challenged the correctness of these figures given ten months ago. Should we compare cost of the bacon hog, it is more than likely that it would range higher than that of lamb; but time and a more limited experience will not permit it. This much can be very safely said, though,—give the production of finished lambs the

next five years similar care and such close attention to the requirements of the markets as the bacon hog producer has the past five years, and there is not the shadow of a doubt in my mind, that it would be found the most profitable source of income that is within reach on the farm.

Another reason why sheep would be found profitable on the farm, is the convenience and pleasure in having lambs at hand in fall and winter to furnish the family larder with one of the most healthful and delicious of meats, when secured from the breeds which supply the best flavored meat.

At present there is the greatest activity in the American sheep markets. The increased value of wool is leading up to a boom in sheep, and that at express rate. Tens of thousands of discarded ranch ewes are finding their way—not to packing houses, as formerly, but go to farmers in the corn-growing states, in car loads to be used for breeding purposes.

In Canada the beginning of the "fever" is being felt. From Ontario ranches rams have been completely gathered for western American ranches, and the supply was short. Enquiries are becoming more and more frequent for ewe breeding stock. The probabilities are, however, that as in past times, so now again, many will hesitate and delay for a year or two, or three, and then dip in when the time for

making the most successful venture is past and gone. The golden opportunity will be missed by many.

It seems to me that a great deal of our success depends on investing in the improvement of our stock and increasing our efforts at the right time.

The successful Scotch drover gave his young friend good advice when he told him to aim at buying when everybody wanted to sell, and to be prepared to sell when the crowd were in the mood to buy freely at top values.

No other meat-making animal on our farms furnishes us with a yearly return while growing into the finished product, as does the sheep in giving us its fleece. That product is promising to be much higher in value for years to come than in the past, as the demand has overtaken the supply.

While the sheep industry is certain to be a rapidly growing one in Ontario, it is to the early—or now—flock owner the cream of the business will go. He who desires to secure the largest profits, with the least expenditure of labor, and feed, will immediately—if he has not got one—invest in a flock, which is capable of producing the kind of lambs which are in the greatest demand in the leading markets.

The poet said, "There is a tide in the affairs of man, which, if taken at the flood leads on to fortune." The wide-awake ones will not wait for the flood; they will get in at the start, and so reap a bounteous reward.

At Chicago, last week, at the International Show, the enquiry for sheep was more than we met with anywhere for ten years, and sales were many and at good paying prices. Yesterday, at Guelph, the highest prices on record were paid for Shropshire and Shropshire grade yearling wethers. Seven cents per lb. live weight for some, not winners, and seven-and-a-half for winners, are prices unheard of in Canada, so far as I know. Since coming to this Fair I have learned that show sheep sold here last year went to the Waldorf-Astoria. New York City's highest-toned hotel, and as an evidence of how they suited that highest class of trade, you can see over in my pens a few wethers sold for the same trade.

With such a combination of conditions, can the most sceptical doubt that a great revival of the sheep-raising business is now at our doors; and that few are the farms in Ontario on which a flock of sheep—small or large—will not pay handsome dividends on investments.

JOHN CAMPBELL.

WE take pleasure in presenting to you, by permission, the talk on Sheep by Mr. JOHN CAMPBELL of Woodville, Ontario; and we will add a few sheep notes and remarks on the wool market.

In the London Sales, September, 1902, there was a very large quantity of Washed Pulled Cross-bred sold at very low prices, 4d. to 6d. per lb., or, 8c. to 12c. In November, following, there was a rise of ten per cent. Since then prices have continued to advance until they are now about double, or one hundred per cent. higher than in 1902. How much of this rise has been caused by the Russian-Japan War we do not know.

There is at present a scarcity of wool, and, if there is no change, we expect to see good clean washed wool sell for 25c per pound.

We wish to caution the farmer about unwashed wool.

As the duty on wool going into the States is 12c. per pound, whether washed or unwashed, one can readily see that the unwashed must find a market with our Canadian mills, which, we are sorry to say, owing to Preferential Tariff, are being driven out of business; e. g., two large mills have disposed, or rather are trying to dispose of their

machinery, four other large mills have been in a liquidator's hands for some months for sale, and up to last reports not a bid had been received for them.

We notice in many parts of Ontario a large poster on every cross-road referring to obnoxious weeds. Would not a few sheep on every farm tend to keep these down?

We have often wondered why sheep could not be grown in Canada as well as in Great Britain. There the rental of land is nearly as much as the value of land in many parts of Canada. The wool in Canada will always bring as much as in Britain, while New York and other large Eastern cities would take all the lambs Canada can produce, and at paying prices. Canada has produced so little wool in the past few years that large manufacturers who formerly looked to Canada for their supplies, now go to New Zealand, Australia, and the Argentine.

On pages 10 and 11 are statistics of the number of sheep and weight of wool produced in the United Kingdoms in 1904, and prices for the past eighty years.

LONG & BISBY, LIMITED.

SHEEP NOTES

Clover aftermath is the best pasture for lambs that have been weaned.

The sheep of whatever breed, whether we will it or not, is a general purpose animal.

No one breed of sheep will succeed in all soils and all situations.

Only the very best animals which are true to their specific varieties of breeds and full of promise should be selected for breeding purposes.

If there are any unthrifty sheep in the flock, separate them from the others, give them a little extra care, and if possible fatten and market.

Always keep Sheep in good condition.

The sheep must have been kept in good condition through the winter months, if you expect them to do well in summer. They should be kept free from ticks, as the ticks go from the sheep to the lambs and are injurious to them. They may be killed by dipping, or using insect powder through a small bellows. This quickly destroys them. During the lambing period, if one keeps the sheep close at home he will save lambs which otherwise might stray away, afterwards being disowned by the mothers.

Sheep do well on a clover sod, but in dry seasons will "eat it out;" but the best pasture for sheep is a June grass sod. If the sheep are kept in the woods, they keep the briars and shrubs down. Sheep should be salted regularly once a week.

When the lambs are young they should not be allowed to stand out in a cold rain, for it nearly kills them. When you commence feeding the lambs in the fall, do not put them on full feed at first or they will waste it. Clover hay, shelled corn and oats make a good feed for them.

Sheep are the nicest stock on the farm and if properly tended are profitable. You should be careful not to let your flock get old but sell off the old each year.

When you dock the lambs it is well to put some lard and turpentine on the wound to take the soreness out. As a rule if the lambs are thin and poor, they will not be good feeders, but if they are stout and healthy, they will prove profitable.

Estimate of the Wool grown in the United Kingdom in 1904.

COUNTY.	Sheep and Lambs. 1903	Weight per fleece. lbs.	Total Weight. lbs.
Lincoln.....	1,039,565	9½	9,875,867
Yorks — East Riding ..	446,900	8	3,575,200
Nottingham.....	184,055	7½	1,384,912
Cornwall.....	383,007	7	2,681,049
Devon.....	822,867	7	5,760,069
Gloucester.....	362,773	7	2,539,411
Oxford.....	220,337	6¾	1,487,274
Northampton.....	379,742	6¾	2,563,258
Rutland.....	79,297	7	555,079
Leicester.....	296,181	7	2,073,267
Warwick.....	262,450	7	1,837,150
Kent.....	819,314	7	5,735,198
Ireland.....	3,944,604	6	23,667,624
Somerset.....	490,112	7	3,430,784
Hereford.....	337,545	5¾	1,940,883
Worcester.....	161,285	5¾	927,389
Stafford.....	211,084	5¾	1,213,733
Shropshire.....	467,478	6	2,804,868
Huntingdon.....	80,041	6	485,646
Bedford.....	97,738	6	586,428
Berkshire.....	153,278	6	910,668
Buckingham.....	184,602	6	1,107,972
Cambridge.....	177,835	6	1,067,010
Herts.....	100,814	6	604,884
Norfolk.....	489,450	6	2,936,700
Suffolk.....	372,490	5	1,862,450
Essex.....	235,364	4½	1,059,138
Surrey.....	60,832	4½	273,744
Middlesex.....	15,339	5	76,695
London.....	3,703	6	22,218
Hants.....	331,687	4½	1,492,591
Sussex.....	305,487	4½	1,779,692
Wilts.....	464,766	4½	2,091,447
Dorset.....	332,672	5	1,663,360
Scotland.....	7,227,395	5	36,136,975
Northumberland.....	1,053,446	6	6,320,676
Cumberland.....	593,231	6	3,559,386
Durham.....	238,514	6	1,431,084
Westmoreland.....	377,686	6	2,266,116
Yorks — North Riding.....	703,830	6	4,222,980
Yorks — West Riding.....	668,878	6	4,013,268
Lancashire.....	333,365	6	2,000,190
Derby.....	140,571	6	843,426
Chester.....	92,633	4½	416,848
Monmouth.....	237,174	4½	1,067,283
Wales.....	3,511,424	3½	12,289,984
Sheep and Lambs in 1903.....	29,584,401		166,650,874
Slaughtered.....	11,562,396 @ 3		34,687,188
Net Clip of Wool in 1904.....			<u>131,963,686</u>

NOTE.—The Sheep and Lambs of 1903 produce the Wool of 1904. The number slaughtered during the year is shown by the number of Lambs in 1904, plus the aggregate decrease of Sheep and Lambs. Thus :—Lambs in 1904, 11,909,566 plus aggregate decrease of Sheep and Lambs, 337,170 = 11,562,396, which, at 3 lbs. per fleece, being the estimated loss of wool, gives 34,687,188 lbs. The above figures are, as usual, exclusive of the Isle of Man and Channel Islands.

Prices of Lincoln and Half-bred Wools
from 1825 to 1904.

Year	Price	Year	Price	Year	Price
1825	17½	1852	13⅝	1879	12½
1826	13	1853	16	1880	15⅛
1827	11½	1854	15½	1881	12⅜
1828	11	1855	13	1882	11¼
1829	10	1856	16	1883	10
1830	9	1857	20½	1884	10
1831	12	1858	15⅝	1885	9⅞
1832	13	1859	18⅝	1886	10
1833	14	1860	20⅓	1887	10½
1834	15½	1861	19½	1888	10⅜
1835	15½	1862	20½	1889	11
1836	16	1863	22⅝	1890	11
1837	13½	1864	27⅜	1891	9¾
1838	14	1865	25¾	1892	8¾
1839	17	1866	23½	1893	10¼
1840	14	1867	18⅞	1894	10⅛
1841	12½	1868	17½	1895	12
1842	11	1869	18⅛	1896	11½
1843	10	1870	16¾	1897	9⅝
1844	11	1871	21⅜	1898	8¾
1845	13	1872	25⅝	1899	8¼
1846	13	1873	24½	1900	7⅞
1847	12	1874	20¾	1901	6⅞
1848	11	1875	19¾	1902	6¼
1849	10	1876	17¾	1903	7¼
1850	11	1877	16¼	1904	10½
1851	12½	1878	15		

Average for 80 years, 14⅛d. per lb.

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